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RECENT THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

RECENT OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE

Professor Brown has undertaken to present a concise commentary upon the Book of Jeremiah,¹ scholarly in character and structure, and withal adapted to the needs of the intelligent reader, whether or not he be acquainted with the Hebrew. The book fills in part the place of the German *kurzgefasste Commentare*, a form of biblical literature which, strangely enough, is still sadly lacking in our language. The work differs from its German parallels in being less original, less desirous of striking out into new paths of criticism and exegesis, while much is made, comparatively, of the edifying functions of a biblical commentary.

The book gives in the left-hand column of the page the text of the Authorized Version; on the right, the author's own translation, the metric passages being presented typographically in poetical form, but without any attempt to produce the exact rhythm of the original. The commentary appears below the text. It was hardly necessary to reprint the Authorized Version, inasmuch as it is at everyone's hand, and its omission would have given room either for more material or for a larger display of the author's translation, the type of which is altogether too fine. In the commentary reference is made primarily to the text of the Authorized Version, but as in most of the cases that need comment, that text requires immediate correction, space and patience would have been saved by reference to the fresh translation. These minor criticisms, however, are to be laid at the door of the general plan of the whole series, not at that of Professor Brown.

In the field of criticism the author moves with the spirit of full religious liberty. His apology is expressed in the following words:

From the present point of view, it will be seen that in the use of the terms "genuine" and "not genuine," and in denying to Jeremiah the authorship of parts of our book, the writer must not be understood as questioning the *authority* of a given passage, or its value to the Christian life, although from a literary point of view it must be allowed that Jeremiah's own words are superior to those of the authors that have been associated with him.

Professor Brown appears to have been especially influenced by Duhm in criticism and exegesis. Yet he refuses to go with that master to the

¹ *The Book of Jeremiah. An American Commentary on the Old Testament.* By Charles Rufus Brown, Ph.D. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907. 257 pages.

length of excising from the Jeremianic material all but the poetical passages. He is not always very positive in his decisions, which rather often appear as a summing-up of the evidence on both sides (e. g., on chaps. 46 ff.), and he inclines to the more conservative position. To be sure, in view of the vast differences of opinion among the recent commentators, such as Giesebrécht, Duhm, Driver (Cornill's commentary appeared after the present work went to press), the book would have exceeded its intended scope, if every critical point were argued out in detail. It may be noticed that the author is inclined to regard the references to the seventy years' captivity (25:12; 29:10) as Jeremianic.

As for the compilation of the Book of Jeremiah, our commentator holds that Jeremiah's edition of 603 B. C. (36:32) consisted substantially of chaps. 1-17, and that the subsequent chapters were added as successive strata, which had appeared independently. Chaps. 18-20, 22-24, 25, which once circulated as separate rolls, were brought together and added to chaps. 1-17, thus forming a new edition; subsequently there were added chaps. 46-51, 30-31, 32-33, 34, 35, 36, 37-39, 40-43, 44, 45. The statement of the construction of the book is clear and reasonable. Baruch is considered to be the author of the historical narratives and prefaces. The commentary is clear and concise, and in general very satisfactory. In all cases of text criticism, the Hebrew original and the author's emendation are given, along with transliteration for the use of the English reader. Critical emendations and interpolated passages are designated in the translation by proper typographical marks. The book is to be welcomed as capitally meeting its purpose and filling a long-felt want. It will be prized by the seminary teacher whose students cannot be referred to the German commentaries, and by the many who desire a brief scholarly, exegetical treatment, with an introduction to the critical problems, but without the confusion that would arise from too radical or individualistic criticism.

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To know a religion scientifically, says Professor Strack,² is a prime requisite for mission work among its adherents. The essence of Judaism is not merely the blood bond, since the nation has absorbed many foreign elements. More important, as a unifying influence, are the recollections of history—the great deeds wrought for their fathers, and the severe persecutions they have endured. While critical views of the Bible vary among

² *Das Wesen des Judentums.* Vortrag gehalten auf der Internationalen Konferenz für Judenmission zu Amsterdam. Von Professor Dr. Herm. L. Strack. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1906. 23 pages. M. o. 30.

Jews, there is a striking uniformity of belief in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. This must be met by a sane criticism. Most significant is the belief in the future of Judaism. Among most Jews the idea of a personal Messiah is abandoned. Judaism has, however, a world-mission: she has given to the world the idea of monotheism. Strack thinks it passing strange that she makes no attempt to spread abroad this idea, but regards Christianity and Islam as her ambassadors to the heathen in this regard.

Dr. Kaatz has given a study of prophetic Judaism,³ in two parts, of which the first has some twelve sections treating of the general theme, and the second has a treatment of such topics as: providence, anthropomorphism, the divine punishment, the election of Israel, Israel's past, divine judgment, the indestructibility of Israel, the law, fasting, the ark of the covenant, repentance, Israel and Judah, sacrifice. The work is written confessedly for Jews—to strengthen their faith and to show that the Scriptures, as the Word of God, contain the infallible truth. Judaism stands or falls with the absolute truth of the Scriptures. The writer is strenuously opposed to evolution and thinks the choice lies between Moses and Darwin. As strenuously does he contend for the efficacy of prayer and the miraculous. Biblical criticism is severely handled. The customary argument about the inability of the critics to agree, is adduced and we are assured that yet newer theories will replace those which prevail today. The task of the critic must prove abortive since his conclusions are based entirely on subjective grounds. So far the introduction.

Part I treats of the essence of prophetical Judaism. By this he means the characteristic features or the tendency of the religious efficiency of the prophets. The deductions are drawn from the prophets Amos to Malachi—those who have left written testimony of their views. If we knew the earlier prophets as we do the later we should not say that prophecy reached its zenith among the latter.

By prophetical Judaism is not to be understood a Judaism which has dispensed with the law, an "ethical" Judaism, or a reformed Judaism. Prophetical Judaism can be understood only by an appeal to the prophets and to those passages whose meaning is unequivocal. Prophecy must not be regarded as mechanical. We cannot get the meaning of any prophet on a given subject by merely counting his utterances. All the prophets equally condemn idolatry, but all the prophets have not spoken with equal force about it. Malachi has a passage that even seems to commend it.

³ *Das Wesen des prophetischen Judentums.* Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Propheten. Von Dr. S. Kaatz, Rabbi in Zabrze. Berlin: Poppelauer, 1907. 109 pages. M. 2.

This was due to the fact that idolatry had disappeared in his day. The prophets have a message for men—for men of their times, and the goal and direction of their message are determined by the spirit of the times. They were neither theologians nor religious philosophers.

The contents of prophetical Judaism agree with that of the Torah, everywhere (*Hos. 8:1*). Here the author takes issue with Duhm in the claim of the latter that prophets are unconscious of a Mosaic law. A sentence is quoted from Duhm to the effect that the pre-exilic prophets were conscious of an antipathy to the ceremonial law, but attention is called to the fact that Duhm fails to mention among these prophets Jeremiah, because this name would have furnished such a striking refutation of his claim. After having taken issue with Duhm on this point the author cites Malachi, to show how faithful the prophets were to the law. More to the point is a reference to Jeremiah, chap. 34, to prove that the pre-exilic prophets were acquainted with the regulation setting slaves free after six years of service. One does not need to point out, however, that such reference is a long way from settling the question of a written Torah at this time.

Part II applies the principles laid down in the first part to the solution of several themes. It is impossible to unite the teaching of the prophets concerning Providence into a regular scientific system. The fundamental prophetical view of Judaism is the same. God loves the good and rewards it: he hates evil and punishes it. There is no difference of opinion as to what is good and evil. To man is given free choice of action and upon him rests the responsibility for its use. The prophets did not discuss the enigma of man's free will and God's foreknowledge. This lay entirely without the sphere of prophecy.

Strong anthropomorphic expressions, such as *Hos. 11:8 f.*, which speaks of God's affection for Israel in the first part and in the second denies that he is like a man, are to be explained by looking at the purpose of the writer. In the case before us, it is to assure Israel of God's favor. From the presence of such strong anthropomorphisms in Hosea the author argues against the view that they arise out of primitive views of religion—a very incomplete reply I fear. The seeming contradiction in *I Sam., chap. 15*, where God is said to have repented that he made Saul king, and when asked to forgive Saul replies that he is not a man to repent, is explained on the ground that it is the rejection of Saul that is the irrevocable thing. The author reveals no consciousness of various documents beneath the interesting history of this period.

The doctrine of the indestructibility of Jerusalem, said by Cornill to have originated with Isaiah, is combated on the ground of several passages

which he quotes from Isaiah. Prophetic sympathy for the law is proved by citations from Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel on the Sabbath. The book closes with a short discussion of the favorable manner in which sacrifices were regarded by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, and Malachi.

Semitic scholars will welcome the first of a projected series of pamphlets⁴ written in defense of that view of the ancient civilization called pan-Babylonianism. The theme of the book itself is the ancient East, and the Egyptian religion, and the discussion of this part of the subject is preceded by a score of pages setting forth the general view of the author, to wit, that the oldest civilization is astral. It is a picture of space and time to be read in the starry heavens. The cosmogony or succession of worlds, and the calendar or succession of ages are set forth through the movement of the planets (especially the sun and moon) and the heavenly dial or zodiac.

This new view had its inception in Eduard Stucken's *Astralmythen*, which claimed an astral character for all myths. Winckler's investigations showed that astral mythology was a part of the world-view which proceeded from the home of all astronomy—Babylon—and spread itself over the eastern world. Everything earthly had its counterpart in heaven where was sketched everything that should appear on earth. All sciences and historical processes were therefore astral. In this introduction Jeremias argues earnestly for the diffusion hypothesis of myths and cites many witnesses in its favor.

The discussion then goes on to prove that the world-idea lying at the base of the Egyptian religion is that which has been denominated pan-Babylonianism. It is time, he says, to open the door that leads from Babylon to Egypt and to show that the religious system of Egypt is fundamentally that of Babylon. The appearance of the God in an animal form has nothing to do with totemism in the majority of cases: it is to be explained as an incarnation of the deity, whose animal form is a representation of forms seen in the star groups. Poertner is quoted in support of the claim that Egypt was one of the first nations to entertain the star cult of the East. Eduard Mahler in a discussion sought to show that in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties the signs of the zodiac existed. Heretofore Egyptologists have refused to accept a view of the Egyptian religion which made it dependent on Babylon. The oldest teaching of Egypt is connected with

⁴ *Im Kampfe um den alten Orient.* Wehr- und Streitschriften herausgegeben von Alfred Jeremias und Hugo Winckler. I. Die Panbabylonisten. Der alten Orient und die aegyptische Religion. Von Alfred Jeremias. Mit 6 Abbildungen. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907. 65 pages. M. o. 80.

the city of On, the Sun city. Nearly all the religious texts bear the stamp of its priesthood and were written or revised there. The primal deep appears in the theology of Egypt. Keb and Nut correspond to Assyrian Apsu and Tiāmat, while Shu corresponds to Mummu and *ruah*. Nut and Keb are separated by Shu which corresponds to the heavens which separates the two halves of the original chaos. Here he is equivalent to Marduk.

The paths of the Egyptian temples in ancient times were protected on either side by statues of animals, as was the case in Babylon. The ritual which expressed honor to the gods on calendar days is suggestive of similar Babylonian ritual. The New Year's celebration of Marduk along the great road Ai-ibur-shabu in a ship is paralleled by the festival of the year god. An inscription which deals with the death and resurrection of Osiris is very similar to the Tammuz festival of the Babylonians. Amon of Thebes is the counterpart of the Marduk of Babylon. Both gladly hear the cries of men. As Marduk fights Tiāmat, so Amon battles with the serpent Apophis. Amon is the Sun god, creator, upholder, and nourisher of life. The pamphlet closes with a discussion of the world of the dead which lies in the West, and describes the judgment scene before Osiris. Throughout reference is made to Erman's work with which the author, of course, takes issue. Any discussion that will help us to understand the relation between these two primitive civilizations will receive a hearty welcome. Jeremias has gone far beyond the suggestion of Hommel, and no doubt his paper will provoke a further discussion of a very interesting theme. It is not to be expected that in so short a book anything like an adequate treatment of the Egyptian religion will be found.

The second pamphlet in the series⁵ is an answer by Winckler to an attack made on his theories by Drs. Gressmann and Küchler, two students of Jensen, who receives some pretty hard blows as the instigator of the attack. It is Jensen who "junge Männer in's Feuer schickt," and who should at least teach his zealous scholars that before a man enters the arena he should have some acquaintance with the facts which he attempts to discuss. The titles of the pamphlets which have aroused Winckler's wrath are *Winckler's Altorientalisches Phantasiebild*, by Gressmann, and *Die Stellung des Propheten Isaia zur Politik seiner Zeit*, by Küchler.

A good deal of feeling is displayed by Winckler—whether just or not need not here be discussed—but while reading the book one has the unpleasant sensation of being present at a family quarrel. The plan of the reply

⁵ *Im Kampfe um den alten Orient.* Wehr- und Streitschriften herausgegeben von Alfred Jeremias und Hugo Winckler. II. Die jüngsten Kämpfer wider den Pan-babylonismus. Von Hugo Winckler. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907. 79 pages. M. 1.

is to quote excerpts from the two writings named above where Winckler is criticized and to answer them. Winckler protests too often that he is unfairly treated, that his works have not been read, and insists, perhaps too frequently, on the vast amount of time he has given to the study of the oriental question, a fact which he seems to think ought to exempt him from criticism, at least from mere schoolboys.

The dispute with Gressmann is not long protracted and concerns principally the question of the presence of astrological matter in the religion of Israel. With Küchler, however, he at once joins issue on the question of Isaiah's relation to the politics of his time, and holds, as it seems to me correctly, that no matter how religious Isaiah's work was, we cannot escape admitting its political bearing. Küchler says in the objectionable passage: "The thesis of Winckler, that Isaiah got his inspiration from Nineveh, is wholly untenable. I am convinced that Isaiah held no positive relation to politics, but on the contrary held himself aloof and dealt with the religious situation of his people, not from a political but from a religious point of view." Winckler in reply takes exception to the phrase "inspiration from Nineveh," a phrase which he disclaims, and holds that all prophetic work was both religious and political; the occasion may have come from Nineveh while the inspiration in a theological sense was from God.

On the burning question of Muṣri, Küchler admits that perhaps one might confess to the existence of a Muṣri in North Syria, which has been confused in the Old Testament with Egypt (II Kings 7:6), but a southern Muṣri can exist only in the imagination of the scholar. The passage from which Winckler sets out to prove a North Arabian Muṣri is from Tiglath-pileser III, where he speaks of appointing an Arab Idi-bi'il as *kēpu* of Muṣri. It is impossible to think of Tiglath-pileser appointing as an Assyrian officer in Egypt an Arab, especially when he is not in possession of Egypt. Further, Küchler is ignorant of the meaning of *kēpu*. It signifies an officer appointed by the Assyrian king in a conquered country to be responsible for his vassals.

Again, since Muṣri is on the border of Meluhha it is difficult to think of it as meaning Egypt. Since 1889 when Winckler first discussed the question, Meluhha is admitted by all scholars to be the Sinaitic peninsula and surrounding territory—in the wider sense West Arabia. No one now identifies Meluhha with Nubia, yet Küchler returns to the old theory because of the expression "schwarze meluhhaer." This Winckler shows occurs in connection with Kūs, which must mean an Arabian Kūs. Communication between Arabia and Africa accounts for the presence of dark-skinned people in Meluhha. Further, a passage from Gudea speaks of Magan, Meluhha, Gubi, and Dilmun together as places having brought wood in ships to Lagash. Nubia is impossible here.

Winckler holds that *mlk jrb* is to be translated king of Jareb. To this Küchler objects: (1) That the parallelism of the passage demands that Jareb correspond to the Assyrian king; (2) that we know of no kingdom of Jareb; (3) that in Hos. 10:6 it is impossible to think of anyone except the king of Assyria. Winckler replies, (1) the Massoretic text of Hos. 10:6 intends king of Jareb, otherwise it would read *el ha-melek Jareb*; (2) the parallelism of Hos. 5:13, "Ephraim goes to Assyria, And he (Israel or Judah) sent to the king of Jareb," supports his theory; (3) in the passage, Hos. 10:6, King Jareb is an interpolation. We are also cited to the passage in I Sam. 15:5, where the text is amended by the omission of a *waw* to read, "Saul came to the town of Amalek, Jareb."

In a little brochure Peisker discusses the extent of the relations of Jahweh to the non-Israelites.⁶ Starting from a statement of Stade, that Israelites were theoretical polytheists, that is, that they believed in the existence of the foreign gods, he attempts a proof of the theory by citations. The appeal made by the king of Moab when he offered up his son upon the walls was effective against Israel, because they believed that Chemosh had actually responded to the appeal. (See II Kings 3:27.)

In the second chapter of Genesis Jahweh is creator of heaven and earth and therefore of heathen lands, so we must have in this place a higher view of the nature of Jahweh. He is also creator of the first pair from whom were derived all the families of the earth. Consequently he is their lord. Here we have a higher view of Jahweh than in the first passage. From such passages as Gen. 9:25 ff., and 27:39 f., where Jahweh curses Canaan and blesses Japheth, we infer that he is enthroned in the heaven and that his arm reaches alike the Israelite and the heathen. This objective lordship cannot be doubted, though it may be explained as the result of later theological development. Other passages declare that Jahweh is subjective lord of the heathen—that is, he is worshiped by them. See I Kings, chap. 17, where the widow of Zarepta speaks of Jahweh as if there were no other God. This may be explained as due to the naïveté of the writer, or the reflected monotheism of the Deuteronomic editor. In Gen., chap. 41, Pharaoh and Joseph are worshipers of the same God. So Abimelech (Gen., chap. 20) receives his dream from the God of Abraham. In a Jahvistic passage Joseph cries out, when tempted, "How shall I sin against Elôhîm?" (Gen. 39:9; cf. 43:29). Does the author here use a neutral

⁶ *Die Beziehungen der Nichtisraeliten zu Jahve nach der Anschauung der altisraelitischen Quellenschriften.* Von Lic. Dr. Martin Peisker. [Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, XII.] Giessen: Töpelmann, 1907. 95 pages. M. 2.50.

word? Not so. In Gen. 31:53 we read of the *elôhim* of Abraham and the *elôhim* of Nahor. This is naïve monotheism and in places where Jahweh is found instead of elôhim we may think of editing.

Part two discusses the content of the relations between Jahweh and the non-Israelites, whether of a direct or indirect character. In the former class belong Jahweh's creative activities and his immediate control of the course of history. The latter grow out of the relationships between Israel and non-Israelites. Non-Israelites are helped by Israel; they sometimes are of assistance to Israel. Hence when they injure Israel unintentionally they are not punished. Pious non-Israelites, coming under the protection of Israel, may not be injured.

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The third volume of the *Hilfsbücher zur Kunde des alten Orients*⁷ gives the essentials of Assyrian grammar in the briefest possible space. Such a book has long been needed by the beginner of Assyrian. The choice and arrangement of the material for a book of this kind is always a difficult matter, and it is easier to offer criticisms than to suggest remedies.

The introduction gives a brief sketch of the history of the language and its relation to the other Semitic tongues, followed by an account of the origin of the cuneiform script. The author still holds the improbable theory that the Semitic Babylonians, on entering the Tigris-Euphrates valley, found there a non-Semitic people, the Sumerians, who had already reached a high stage of culture and had developed the script later taken over by these Babylonians. That the Sumerians invented the cuneiform script is probable; the rest of the theory is highly improbable.

The remainder of the book is taken up with a section on phonology, and another on etymology, interspersed with remarks on syntax. The quantity of the vowels is carefully given; in fact, some vowels are incorrectly marked long. For instance, it is improbable from the side of phonetics that the *a* in the enclitic *ma* is long, and there is nothing in the literature to prove it. In the same way, some of the rules of accent given in § 25 are quite arbitrary.

The verb is fully treated. There is, however, no excuse whatever for choosing new verbs for the paradigms. The paradigms of Delitzsch's *Grammar* are and should be the standard. In the paragraph given to the verbs *nadânu* and *nazâzu*, *ulziz* for *ušziz* is not noted.

The syntax is inadequately treated. Assyrian grammar has advanced

⁷ *Kurzgefasste Assyrische Grammatik*. Von Bruno Meissner. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907. v+80 pages. M. 3.50.

beyond the stage where it is possible to disregard the force of the present, preterite, or permansive forms of the verb. A careful study of such a text as Nebuchadrezzar's *East India House Inscription* would have removed the doubt expressed in § 51 as to whether the permansive can be used like the present in circumstantial clauses.

For completeness a "Lesestücke" should follow.

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Professor Kent's latest addition to "The Student's Old Testament" series⁸ presents all the legal material of the Old Testament classified according to the various codes and arranged on a scheme suggested by Ex., chaps. 21ff. The divisions are: (1) personal and family laws; (2) criminal laws; (3) humane laws; (4) religious laws, defining obligations to God; and (5) ceremonial laws. The citation of the laws, which are explained by copious footnotes excellently adapted to the needs of students, is preceded by six essays on the Babylonian background of Israel's laws, the origin and growth of Israelitish law, the primitive Hebrew codes, the Deuteronomic codes, Ezekiel and the Holiness code, and the Priestly codes. In addition to this there is an index of biblical passages, several useful charts and diagrams, and a valuable appendix.

While the present volume is by no means the only attempt to deal with the laws of Israel, being preceded by some four or five comparisons of the Mosaic with Hammurabi Code—notably that of Müller—yet it has the unique distinction of presenting the material classified and in chronological order. It is not to be wondered at that there has been little interest shown in the Mosaic legislation by persons who believed that Exodus and Deuteronomy were the product of one period, not to say one man. With this book the study of Israel's laws takes a new form and one of exceeding interest. The light that is thrown on every sphere of life among the Hebrews is wonderful. The student can trace the development of the family and the growth of what we call society and the increasing complexity of economic problems. At the expense of some repetition the material has been put in most convenient form. The chief merit of the book is not that it makes new additions to knowledge, but that it presents the material in such orderly arrangement that others can use it as a field for original research.

The discovery by Bertheau in 1840 that there was an original decad arrangement in the primitive codes and the later subdivision of the decades

⁸ *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*: From the days of Moses to the closing of the Legal Canon. ("The Student's Old Testament.") By Charles F. Kent. New York: Scribners, 1907. 301 pages. \$2.75.

into pentads has aided much in the restoration of the true order. The explanation of the pentad arrangement of laws as originating in the childhood of the race, when the fingers were used as an aid to memory, is interesting, but the requirement that all laws on a certain subject should number five or ten, and especially that the moral law should fall into this arrangement, while undoubtedly quite in harmony with the Hebrew mind, introduces a mechanical element which does not favor the theory of prophetic origin.

The treatment of the Decalogue of Ex., chap. 20, which is naturally the center of interest, is the least satisfactory part of the work. It is doubtless encompassed with difficulties, the solution of which seems to Professor Kent to be hopeless. From a mathematical standpoint it may be so, but there are considerations which render the current theory that the present setting is to be referred to the eighth century and the simplest form to Moses altogether too improbable. In the first place everyone is familiar with the position of the "Commandments" in the time of Christ. The word has but one sense and everyone knows it. The binding force of the "Commandments" is unique and it has persisted to the present day. That this should be the case, and that there should be no recognition of this authority in the Old Testament with the possible exception of the latest apocryphal books, is something which must be well explained before it can be supposed that the Decalogue was set forth, with the prestige of its present position, in the eighth century. It may be said that the only "argument" for the traditional view of the Decalogue is the fear of the consequences of relinquishing it. Again the ignorance shown in the Old Testament of any authoritative ethical law is an argument which grows on a student in proportion as he rids himself of his prejudices. That David should have committed murder and adultery and been rebuked by Nathan for meanness is hard to reconcile with any Mosaic authorship. When, in the eighth century, the prophets were so powerfully impressed by the incidents of the Exodus, what is the reason they are silent about the tremendous theophany and the moral law? Again the "visiting sins" is directly contrary to the mind of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. The conclusion which fits best with the facts is that the Decalogue of Ex., chap. 20, represents a slow crystallization of moral ideas, which a late post-exilic editor, desiring to give it the prestige of a divine revelation, placed in its present position, displacing an original Ephraimitic ten words, corresponding to Ex., chap. 34, and concealing them in the three chapters following Ex. 20: 18.

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The first chapters of Genesis have been discussed for many years, but the last word has not yet been said on them and there is still room for a thorough scientific investigation of their character. Such an investigation is given us by Professor Gordon in his *Early Traditions of Genesis*.⁹ This book cannot be praised too highly for its scientific method and its thoroughness. It is written with full mastery of the earlier literature and brings many new and valuable suggestions to the solution of the problems. It may unhesitatingly be recommended as the best book in English on the subject, and it is doubtful whether there is a better treatise in any other language. Through such monographs as this, that discuss a limited theme thoroughly, critical science is more advanced than by more ambitious works that cover a wider field in a superficial manner.

The author begins with an analysis of the documents in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Following earlier critics he distinguishes, first, the elements drawn from the Priestly Code (P). Here the agreement of scholars is so complete that there is no need for an extended discussion. This material constitutes a "complete, clear and close-knit context." The residuum that belongs to the Jahvistic narrative, on the other hand, is highly complex. Most easily discriminated is the Flood Story and kindred sections in 4:25, 26; 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10, 7-9, 16c, 12, 17b, 22 f.; 8:6a, 2 f., 6b, 7-13b, 20-22; 9:18 f.; 10:1b, 17-18a, 19, 18b, 21, 25-30, which since Budde's discussion have been regarded as a later element intruded into J and commonly known as J². The material that is left after the subtraction of J² is distinguished from J² by speaking of "the man" instead of Adam ("man" used as a proper name without the article), and by the fact that it assumes the steady development of the arts and industries from the earliest down to the latest times without the interruption of the Deluge. This older stratum of J is also composite. It consists of an original nucleus found in 2:4b-7, 9a, 18-24; 4:1, 17-24. "In these verses, then, we have a clear and consistent account of the making of the world, and the beginnings of civilization from the desert point of view" (p. 7). "On this hypothesis the author of the main body of J had before him an earlier narrative of the making of the world and man, and the origins of civilization, from the desert point of view, round which as a nucleus he gathered his other materials, giving them what seemed to him the most suitable position in the system. Thus, as we have seen, the story of Eden found its appropriate setting in the account of the Creation (2:4b ff.). On the same principle, the most natural place for the introduction of the tragedy of Cain and Abel was

⁹ *The Early Traditions of Genesis*. By Alex. R. Gordon, D. Litt. Edinburgh: Clark; New York: Scribners, 1907. xii + 346 pages. \$2.25

after 4:1, which told of the birth of Cain, the firstborn son of "the man," (pp. 11f.). The different strata obtained by the process of critical analysis are exhibited in detail with notes in an appendix. Here it would have been helpful if the layers of tradition within J had been discriminated by the use of different types.

In the second chapter Professor Gordon discusses the age and relations of the documents discovered by the foregoing processes of literary criticism. "The most probable date (for the original nucleus of J) would seem to be the reign of Solomon, to which we may plausibly ascribe the first collections of Israelite song and tradition found in the *Book of Jashar* and the *Book of the Wars of Jahveh*" (p. 22). "In J the Palestinian coloring of 4:22 f. and 9:20 ff. presupposes the settlement of Israel in the land of Canaan. . . . More exact indications are not found in the chapters immediately under review. We must content ourselves, therefore, with a bare reference to the facts noted by scholars: the inclusion in J of a list of kings of Edom "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (Gen. 36:31 ff.), with more doubtful suggestions (Gen. 27:40; Josh. 6:26), pointing to a date later than the early monarchy, but in any case earlier than Deuteronomy, whose historical narratives are based on J and E, and earlier, too, than the first literary prophets, who show unmistakable acquaintance with the Jahvistic traditions, and most probably with the written narrative . . . in other words, to the generally accepted date—*circa* 850 B. C., or very shortly after" (p. 22). "J² is well acquainted with the chief cities of Babylonia and Assyria, and shows likewise a far more detailed knowledge of their traditions and myths than the earlier Jahvist. This widening of the field of knowledge we can only explain by the supposition that in the interval the Assyrian Empire had crossed the horizon of Israel. This would carry us to the beginning of the reign of Menahem, king of Israel (*ca.* 745), when Tiglathpileser III first interfered in the affairs of the Western kingdom. But, if the narrative be Judean, as is most probable, we should find the date somewhat after 735–734, when Ahaz, king of Judah, purchased the help of Tiglathpileser against the allied armies of Israel and Syria in the Syro-Ephraimitic war, in consequence of which the Assyrian king threw his forces against Damascus and Israel, and Ahaz became his vassal" (p. 23). P, in the list of names in Gen., chap. 10, shows evidence of its post-exilic origin. "The mention of Gomer among the 'sons of Japhet' necessitates a date later than 667 B. C., when the Gimirrai first came into contact with the Assyrian power. . . . Other names in the list lead to the same point: e.g., Javan, with his 'sons' (10:4), presupposing the Ionian colonization of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean coasts during the sixth

and fifth centuries b. c." (p. 25). P shows dependence upon J throughout, and also uses an earlier document which he cites as the "Book of the Generations of Adam" in 5:1 (p. 31).

Having thus investigated the literary analysis and the dating of the constituent parts, the author proceeds to the more difficult problem of the oral sources of the early traditions on which the Hebrew documents have been based. In the light of Israel's historical origin he recognizes that these traditions must come from a variety of sources. Traditions learned in the desert, traditions borrowed from the Kenites and Canaanites, and traditions derived from Babylonia, must be woven together in the complex tissue of folk-lore that underlies the early chapters of Genesis. Some of the traditions bear such clear marks of their origin that they can easily be assigned to one or other of these classes; others are more doubtful. After a searching examination of the material the conclusion is reached that the stories in Gen., chaps. 1-11, are derived from the following oral sources: I. Traditions purely Israelite: (1) Reminiscences of their wanderings in the East: the scenic coloring of Paradise (2:8 ff.), the dispersal from Babel (11:8 f.), the descent from Arpachshad (10:24), the Mesopotamian line (11:14 ff.), and the migrations of Abram (11:28 ff.). (2) Palestinian traditions: Noah and his sons (9:20 ff.), Cain and Abel (4:2 ff.). II. Traditions introduced by the Kenite allies of Israel: the origin of the world (2:5 ff.), the line of aboriginal patriarchs (4:1, 17 ff.), and the beginnings of civilization (4:20 ff.). III. Traditions derived from the Canaanites: the *amours* of the angels (6:1-4). IV. Traditions transmitted from the Babylonians: (1) Through Canaanite influence in the earlier period: the raw materials of the narratives of Paradise and the Fall (chaps. 2, 3), and the Tower of Babel (11:1 ff.); (2) Directly, about the reign of Ahaz: the Flood story of J², a general acquaintance with ten antediluvian patriarchs (4:25 ff.), and knowledge of Babylonian and Assyrian geography and legends (2:10 ff.; 10:8 ff.); (3) Again directly, during the Exile: P's more minute acquaintance with these traditions, as shown in his account of Creation (chap. 1), his elaborate line of patriarchs (chap. 5), and his story of the Flood (chaps. 6-9).

One might be disposed to question some of the details of this analysis, for instance, the assignment of the story of the dispersal from Babel to a Hebrew source, and some of the discriminations between Hebrew and Kenite tradition, still this chapter is a fine piece of work, and is a real contribution to the study of the origins of ancient Hebrew tradition. This is a field in which Old Testament criticism has made little more than a beginning, and the investigations of this volume will do much toward

clarifying thought and stimulating further research. As a protest against current German Pan-Babylonianism, which traces everything in Hebrew tradition to a Babylonian root, this study is timely. Although Professor Gordon recognizes that the sources of Hebrew tradition are manifold, he does not minimize the extent of Babylonian influence. This he does not limit to any one period, but holds that it was exerted at intervals throughout the whole history of the Hebrews, from the time of their residence in Ur of the Chaldees down to the period of the Babylonian captivity.

He then takes up the important but often neglected question of the religious significance of these ancient traditions. Under the heads of "Myth and Legend," "Israel's Conception of God," "The Cosmogonies," "The Nature and Destiny of Man," he points out in an admirable manner how in early times myth and legend have always been the bearers of the highest religious ideas. He shows how the idea of God in Israel was distinguished from the idea in all other ancient races by his unity; by his supremacy over nature as a free Personality, self-existent and self-sufficient, who acts and works according to his own sovereign will; by the names that are given him and the meaning attached to them; by the limits placed upon anthropomorphism, by the prominence given to the ethical element in his character, and by the thought of his love and care for men. Through this new conception of God ancient materials derived from the most heterogeneous sources have been purified and elevated until they have become a worthy vehicle for conveying the message of the earlier Hebrew prophets. These myths cannot be treated either as history or as science, in the modern sense of the word, and it is futile to try to reconcile the cosmology which they presuppose with the conclusions of astronomy or geology; nevertheless, this does not impair their profound and enduring religious and moral value. No recent writer has succeeded so well in showing how the keenest literary and historical criticism leaves unimpaired the religious value of the opening chapters of Genesis. People whose faith has been disturbed by modern critical research will doubtless find this volume very helpful.

The eighth chapter is devoted to the historical traditions of the Hebrews, that is, to the traditions which comprise the latter part of the Book of Genesis from the twelfth chapter onward. This is the least satisfactory portion of the work. Although the author has recognized four main oral sources of the primeval traditions in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, he here recognizes only one source, the national tradition of the Hebrews. All the heterogeneous and frequently contradictory statements of the patriarchal stories are interpreted as reminiscences of the migrations of the forefathers of Israel in the East and in Canaan. When one tradition says that they came

from Haran and another from Ur, this is interpreted in the old-fashioned harmonistic manner, that they were first in Ur and then in Haran. That all these traditions are derived from one source is very improbable. Israel of the period of the kings, when these legends first took literary form, was a composite people made up out of the Hebrews that had come in across the Jordan and the Canaanites who were indigenous in the land. The early historical records all agree that the Canaanites were not exterminated, but that they mingled with the Hebrews, and that they left a deep impress upon their civilization and their religion. It is inconceivable, therefore, that the Canaanites should not have contributed stories of their forefathers and origins, to the common fund of tradition of the united people. That this actually occurred is shown by the curious duplication of traditions that runs through the whole later part of Genesis. One tradition puts the patriarchs back in the time of Hammurabi (*ca.* 2250 B. C.), the other regards them as part of the Aramaean migration, that did not enter Palestine before 1400 B. C. One places them in the desert; the other, in the land of Canaan. One brings them from Haran in Mesopotamia; the other, from Ur in Babylonia. Most of the patriarchs have a double set of names, e.g., Abraham and Abram, Jacob and Israel, Esau and Edom, which points to a fusing of two cycles of tradition. When we add to this the discovery of Jacob and Joseph as place-names in Palestine in the lists of Thothmes III, and remember how many Babylonian traditions came to Israel by way of the Canaanites, it becomes clear that many of the patriarchal traditions in Genesis must be of Canaanite origin. They have been fused with the genuine Hebrew traditions just as closely as Canaanite and Hebrew elements have been fused in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, and the disentangling of the elements is just as much a necessity in one case as in the other. It is also hard to see why Babylonian traditions should cease with the eleventh chapter. Professor Gordon has not reckoned sufficiently with the probability that interwoven with Hebrew and Canaanite elements there are also Babylonian stories in the latter part of Genesis.

The last chapter is devoted to an admirable sketch of ancient social and religious institutions as depicted in the early narratives of Genesis. Elaborate appendices contain the analysis of the documents, a philological commentary upon them, and also translations of the more important Babylonian parallels.

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